



Dating Violence among New York City Youth

Dating violence occurs when one person uses abusive and/or unhealthy behaviors to exert power and control over his or her partner. It is a serious problem for adolescents and is considered a type of intimate partner violence. Dating violence can have negative effects for people throughout life. Youth who are victims of dating violence in high school are at a higher risk for poorer health outcomes and of being victimized later in life.¹⁻²

While dating violence can include multiple forms of abusive behaviors such as verbal abuse, emotional abuse, financial abuse, and sexual abuse, this brief will focus only on physical abuse and its association with other risk factors and health outcomes. From here on, the use of the term “dating violence” is meant to indicate only physical abuse.

In 2013, among New York City (NYC) public high school students who reported dating in the past year, 10% reported being purposefully hit, slammed into something, or injured with an object or weapon by someone they were dating. Nationally, high school students were equally likely to report experiencing physical dating violence compared with NYC students (10% among those who reported dating)³. Compared with NYC students who did not report experiencing dating violence, those who did were also more likely to report a number of other risk behaviors and conditions that could adversely affect their health in the future.

Characteristics of NYC youth who experience dating violence

- There were no significant differences in the likelihood of reporting one or more incidents of dating violence by sex, age, grade, or race/ethnicity.
- However, youth who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual or who weren't sure of their sexual orientation were over twice as likely to report experiencing dating violence compared with those who identified as straight (18% vs. 8%).
- Youth who were overweight or obese were also more likely to experience dating violence compared with those who were a 'healthy weight' (13% and 9%, respectively).

Mental health and help-seeking behavior among victims of dating violence

- Youth who experienced dating violence were also more likely to experience poor mental health.
- Students who reported being a victim of dating violence were almost twice as likely as those who did not, to report being persistently sad for at least two weeks in a row (50% vs. 28%); they were also nearly four times as likely to report a suicide attempt (31% vs. 8%) and more than five times as likely to have sustained an injury requiring medical care from a suicide attempt (12% vs. 2%).
- Youth who experienced dating violence were more than twice as likely to report non-suicidal self-harming behavior, compared with those who did not (36% vs. 16%).
- Compared with youth who did not experience dating violence, youth who did were also more likely to get help from a counselor, social worker, or therapist for an emotional or personal problem (32% and 18%, respectively).

Definitions:

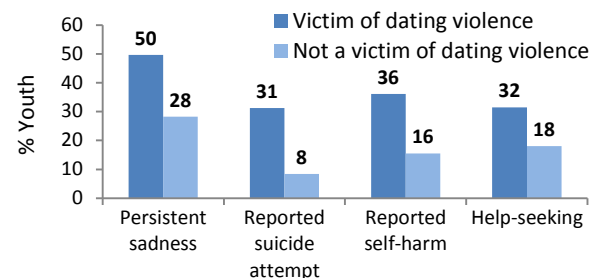
Youth – New York City public high school students in grades 9 through 12, aged 13 years and older.

Persistent sadness is feeling so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that the student stopped doing some usual activities, during the past 12 months.

Self-harm refers to purposely hurting oneself without wanting to die, such as cutting or burning oneself on purpose, during the past 12 months.

Help-seeking is getting help from a professional counselor, social worker, or therapist for an emotional or personal issue that the student could not face alone, during the past 12 months.

Mental health and help-seeking* by dating violence among New York City youth, 2013



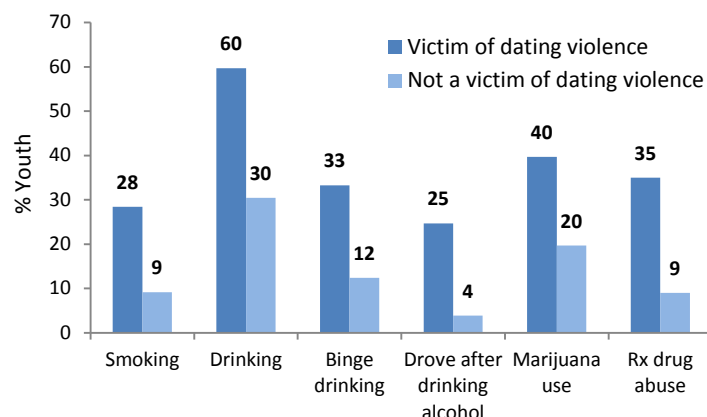
*All behaviors are during the past 12 months

Source: 2013 NYC Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use are associated with dating violence victimization

- Youth who experienced dating violence reported more use of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs compared with those who did not experience dating violence.
- Compared with those who did not experience dating violence, victims of dating violence
 - were three times as likely to report smoking in the past 30 days (28% vs. 9%);
 - were also much more likely to report having a drink of alcohol (60% vs. 30%) or binge drinking in the past 30 days (33% vs. 12%);
 - were six times as likely to report driving a car or other vehicle after drinking alcohol in the past 30 days (25% vs. 4%);
 - were twice as likely to report smoking marijuana in the past 30 days (40% vs. 20%);
 - were four times as likely to have taken a prescription painkiller (such as OxyContin, Percocet, Vicodin, Hydrocodone, or Oxycodone) or other prescription medication (such as Xanax, Adderall, or Ritalin) without a doctor's prescription in the past 12 months (35% vs. 9%); and,
 - were four times as likely to report ever using hard drugs including cocaine, heroin, methamphetamines, ecstasy, or injecting drugs (32% vs. 8%).

Tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use by dating violence among New York City youth, 2013*



*All behaviors are within the past 30 days, except for taking prescription pain relievers and other medications without a doctor's prescription (past 12 months)
Source: 2013 NYC Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Safety issues among victims of dating violence

- Aside from the physical and emotional effects of dating violence, youth who experienced dating violence were more likely than others to have other safety issues.
- Dating violence victims were three times as likely to carry a weapon in the past 30 days compared with others (29% vs. 9%) and 13% of dating violence victims carried a gun in the past 30 days (compared with 2% of those who were not victims of dating violence).
- Compared with those who did not experience dating violence, those who did were more than three times as likely to miss at least one day of school in the past 30 days because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school (25% vs. 7%).

Weapon carrying, missed school* by dating violence among New York City youth, 2013



*All behaviors are within the past 30 days
Source: 2013 NYC Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Authored by: Michael Sanderson and Kimberly Johnson

Acknowledgements: Charon Gwynn, Cynthia Driver, Kinjia Hinterland, Liza King, Lauren Murray, Shirley Berger, Catherine Stayton, and Sarah Conderino

Data Source: The NYC Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) 2013 is a self-administered, anonymous survey conducted in NYC public high schools by the Health Department and NYC Department of Education. For more survey details, visit nyc.gov/html/doh/html/data/youth-risk-behavior.shtml

MORE New York City Health Data and Publications

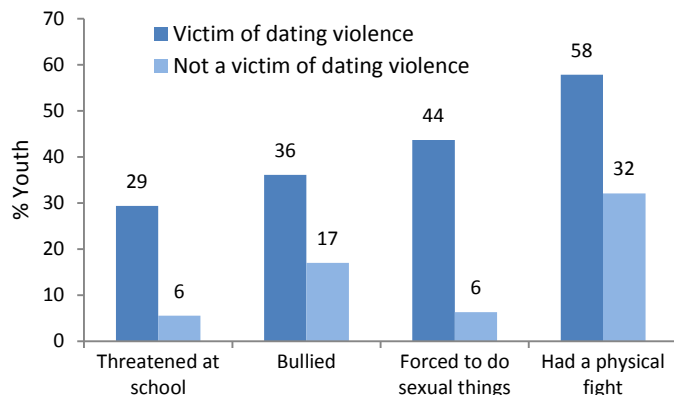
- For complete tables of data presented in this Brief, visit nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/epi/datatable67.pdf
- Visit EpiQuery – the Health Department's online, interactive health data system: nyc.gov/health/EpiQuery

Data & Statistics at nyc.gov/health/data

Harassment and other issues among victims of dating violence

- Compared with those who did not experience dating violence, youth who did were five times as likely to be threatened or injured with a weapon at school in the past 12 months (29% vs. 6%).

Bullying and threatening* by dating violence among New York City youth, 2013



*All behaviors are during the past 12 months

Source: 2013 NYC Youth Risk Behavior Survey

- Bullying is a problem that also disproportionately affects those who have been a victim of dating violence. Thirty-six percent of dating violence victims also reported being bullied (either at school or electronically), compared with 17% for those who did not experience dating violence.
- Victims of dating violence were also seven times more likely to report being forced to do sexual things they did not want to do in the past 12 months by someone they were dating (44% vs. 6%), compared with those who were not.
- Victims of dating violence were also more likely to have been in a physical fight in the past 12 months compared with others (58% vs. 32%).

Resources and information about dating violence among youth

Additional information about dating violence is available on the Center for Disease Control website:

cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/teen_dating_violence.html

Hotlines:

Emergencies	911
Information and Services	311
NYC Domestic Violence Hotline	800-621-HOPE (4673)
NYC Domestic Violence Hotline TTY	866-604-5350
NYPD Sex Crimes Report Hotline	212-267-7273
NYC Rape and Sexual Assault Hotline	212-227-3000
Dept. of Youth and Community Development's Youth Connect	800-246-4646
NYC Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence	212-788-3156
National Suicide Prevention Hotline	800-273-TALK
LIFENET	800-543-3638
LIFENET (Spanish)	877-298-3373
LIFENET (Mandarin/Cantonese)	877-990-8585

Websites:

www.nyc.gov/domesticviolence (more information on where to find help in NYC)

www.loveisrespect.org

www.athinline.org

References:

- Exner-Cortens D, Eckenrode J, and Rothman E. Longitudinal Association Between Teen Dating Violence Victimization and Adverse Health Outcomes. *Pediatrics*. 2013; 1: 71-78.
- Halpern CT, Spriggs AL, Martin SL, and Kupper LL. Patterns of Intimate Partner Violence Victimization to Young Adulthood in a Nationally Representative Sample. *Journal of Adolescent Health*. 2009. 45(5): 508-516.
- Kann L, Kinchen S, Shanklin S et al. "Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance – United States, 2013". Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss6304a1.htm?s_cid=ss6304a1_w. Accessed March 31, 2015.